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To: ["R7 Senior" <Staff>](#)
CC:
Date: 7/31/2014 12:29:22 PM
Subject: OPA Afternoon Clips - 7/29/14

Think Progress - How Climate Denial Could Cost This Iowa Senate Candidate An Election - 7/30/14 - Storm clouds are beginning to gather for Joni Ernst, the Republicans' contender for Iowa's Senate seat this November. Several liberal and environmental groups have targeted her with campaigns aimed at highlighting her climate positions and the money she's received from the Koch Brothers and other fossil fuel groups. <http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2014/07/30/3465997/ernst-iowa-climate-senate-race/>

Brownfield Ag News - NCBA official warns of water rule's 'significant impact' - 7/31/14 - The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) is encouraging its members and all cattlemen to submit comments on the EPA's "Waters of the U.S." rule. NCBA environmental counsel Ashley McDonald says, in the case of cattlemen, the impact of the rule will be significant. <http://brownfieldagnews.com/2014/07/30/ncba-official-warns-of-water-rules-significant-impact/>

KMOX Radio St. Louis - Stenger: Dooley Has Conflict of Interest in Burning Bridgeton Landfill - 7/31/14 - Charlie Dooley's challenger in the race for St. Louis County Executive is accusing him of a conflict of interest on the burning Bridgeton landfill. Steve Stenger says it's wrong for the nuclear dump site spokesman, Richard Callow, to also be playing a role in the Dooley re-election effort. <http://stlouis.cbslocal.com/2014/07/31/stenger-dooley-has-conflict-of-interest-in-burning-bridgeton-landfill/>

Des Moines Register - State environmental protection commission to consider livestock oversight rules Aug. 19 - 7/31/14 - The Iowa Environmental Protection Commission will consider adopting rules that outline oversight of concentrated animal feeding operations at its Aug. 19 meeting. <http://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/money/agriculture/green-fields/2014/07/31/state-considers-livestock-oversight-rules-aug-19/13412319/>

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Society of Environmental Journalists - What the Public Isn't Allowed To Know Could Kill You - 7/30/14 - You'd think that if U.S. chemical facilities could be used as weapons of mass destruction by terrorists, the government would do something about it. You'd be wrong. It wasn't EPA that tried to keep the public from knowing about the catastrophic threats from chemical facilities. It was Congress, working at the behest of the chemical industry. <http://www.sej.org/publications/watchdog-tipsheet/what-public-isnt-allowed-know-could-kill-you>

Chicago Tribune - Commentary: What climate change debate? | Case closed: Scientists agree we are changing the Earth - 7/31/14 - The so-called climate debate presumes that there is, in fact, debate among the scientists who study our climate. This is simply not the case. The truth is that there is a strikingly strong consensus among climate scientists — above 97 percent — that our planet is warming and we are primarily to blame. <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/opinion/commentary/ct-climate-change-debate-perspec-0730-20140731.0.1628719.story>

NOTE: Paywall issues may keep you from seeing this article. Full text is included at the end of this email.

NPR - Pop-Up Books Make Environmental Science Easy-Peasy For Kids - 7/30/14 - For the average school kid, weighty, wonky topics like conservation, climate change and the circular economy might sound off-putting, if not downright dull. Yet Christiane Dorion has sold millions of children's books about these very concepts. The trick? She never mentions them. <http://www.npr.org/2014/07/30/336396785/pop-up-books-make-environmental-science-easy-peasy-for-kids>

Huffington Post (blog) - Clean Power Plan Leads to Healthy Kids - 7/30/14 - It shouldn't be dangerous to breathe. But, for thousands of kids in Atlanta, just going outside is like

a fullback going into a game without a helmet - unhealthy and unsafe. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ovie-mughelli/clean-power-plan-leads-to_b_5635254.html

Des Moines Register

State environmental protection commission to consider livestock oversight rules Aug. 19

Donnelle Eller, deller@dmreg.com 12:50 p.m. CDT July 31, 2014

The Iowa Environmental Protection Commission will consider adopting rules that outline oversight of concentrated animal feeding operations at its Aug. 19 meeting.

The meeting begins at 10 a.m. and will be held at Wallace State Office Building Auditorium in Des Moines.

Groups like Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement have lobbied the commission to adopt stricter oversight rules for livestock producers.

The Des Moines-based grassroots environmental group says more livestock operations should be required to get permits and that the state should include a provision that allows it to shutdown feeding operations that have three manure spills.

Activists also have called for five commission members with ties to cattle or pig production to recuse themselves from voting on proposed clean water rules that govern the industry. Leaders have said state law requires some members to represent the agriculture industry.

Chicago Tribune Commentary

What climate change debate?

Case closed: Scientists agree we are changing the Earth

By Seth B. Darling
July 31, 2014

Already in the first six months of 2014, Sunday broadcast news shows have spent more time covering climate change than they did over the past four years combined. This expanded coverage comes on the heels of reports by the National Climate Assessment that warned of the already damaging effects of disruptions to our climate and by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change alerting us — once again — to an increasingly dire future across the globe. Dig a little deeper, however, and it is clear that our civic conversation on this topic remains shrouded in misconception.

Mainstream outlets such as ABC's "This Week" and NBC's "Meet The Press" opted to provide substantial airtime to climate skeptics in addition to the climate science experts, in the misguided model of providing a "balanced" perspective. The so-called climate debate presumes that there is, in fact, debate among the scientists who study our climate.

This is simply not the case.

The truth is that there is a strikingly strong consensus among climate scientists — above 97 percent — that our planet is warming and we are primarily to blame. It's near impossible to get 97 percent of scientists to agree about much of anything beyond the basic laws of physics. The fact that the consensus is this broad tells us it is time to end the idea that there is any debate in the scientific community.

Because the mass media have propped up a false debate, the general public is understandably confused. There are things we are still learning about climate and our effect on it, but the basic concepts attacked by skeptics are those that the scientific community has established with considerable evidence. Most skeptic arguments are built on a common error: cherry-picking bits of data without seeing the big picture.

Cherry-picking lies behind the claims that the glaciers are growing and that the planet isn't getting warmer. Yes, some glaciers are growing, but many more are shrinking. Yes, there are certain times when certain regions of the world become cooler, but overall there is no doubt that the average global temperature is rising over time. It's called global warming for a reason.

It is also easy to fall into the trap of confusing local weather and global climate. The fact that last winter was bitterly cold in much of North America is not a sign that global warming is a hoax — other regions of the world experienced unusually warm temperatures in the same period, and climate change can be assessed only on much longer time scales. This is also an example of an extreme weather phenomenon we are likely to experience more frequently as climate change becomes more severe.

One of the most dangerous skeptic myths argues that we are indeed changing our climate but that a warming planet is really a good thing. No doubt there will be some limited benefits of climate change, at least in the short term. Melting of the Arctic Sea ice, for example, will open up new navigation routes as well as untapped oil and gas resources.

But the negative consequences dwarf the handful of beneficial outcomes. Agriculture will be ravaged by more severe droughts and floods, rising oceans will inundate coastal regions, geopolitical instability will be rife. Projections of costs to the global economy are in the hundreds of trillions of dollars, and the human suffering will be unprecedented — often affecting the poor more than those of us most responsible for the fossil fuel emissions.

Regardless of one's political standpoint or whether one believes it is happening, Earth's climate is changing and we are the root cause. There is no climate debate — at least not among the folks who have actually studied the science — and we should all stop pretending there is one.

The responsibility for maintaining our planet's climate lies with each of us. Power plants may represent some of the largest emitters of greenhouse gases, but we are all consumers of the power they produce.

This isn't about pointing fingers. It's about understanding the problem and, more important, taking action. There are solutions available to mitigate the worst impacts of climate change. But time is short and the task is daunting in its scale.

We can debate which solutions offer the greatest benefit but not whether there is a problem. That case is closed. Now it's time to recognize that failure to act puts our children's future — and that of all subsequent generations — in peril.

Seth B. Darling is a scientist specializing in energy research at the Center for Nanoscale Materials at Argonne National Laboratory, a fellow at the Institute for Molecular Engineering at the University of Chicago and co-author of the forthcoming book "How to Change Minds About Our Changing Climate."